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Cottager influx during pandemic would strain health system, doctors say

JENN WATT

Editor

In a letter distributed through social media channels over the weekend, the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team reached out to seasonal residents, asking them to think about the limited resources available in the county before they decide to come to the area during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We face some harsh realities recognizing that we have limited capacity to manage a health emergency. A substantial influx of visitors will further challenge our ability to source adequate beds, medical supplies, equipment and personal protective equipment to manage this pandemic," reads the letter, which is signed by the physicians of Haliburton County.

The Haliburton hospital has only 15 beds with a small number of doctors available, the letter says, and while Minden has an emergency department, it has no in-patient beds.

"Neither location is equipped as an ICU [intensive care unit] and each has two transport ventilators that are used for transport to the closest ICU over an hour away. We anticipate that our closest ICU will be strained supporting the

see RURAL page 2



SIRCH steps up

SIRCH's Jay McIvor, left, and volunteer Cathy McIlmurray prepare SIRCH meals on Friday March 27 at SIRCH Central, located at 2 Victoria Street in Haliburton, which will be open Saturday and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for pick up of free frozen meals. Meals are prepared and packaged using COVID-19 protocols and will be distributed at the door. SIRCH meals can also be asked for at food banks./DARREN LUM Staff

Multiple COVID-19-related deaths at Bobcaygeon nursing home

CHAD INGRAM

Staff Reporter

Seven residents of the Pinecrest Nursing Home in Bobcaygeon have died of

complications related to COVID-19 and more than 20 of the home's staff have tested positive for the virus, making it the worst outbreak in the province.

As of the afternoon of March 30, the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit confirmed that seven

of some 65 residents at the facility had died of the coronavirus. An additional two deaths have occurred there since an outbreak was declared March 18, but the health unit says those two deaths were not related to COVID-19.

see THIRTY-FIVE page 2



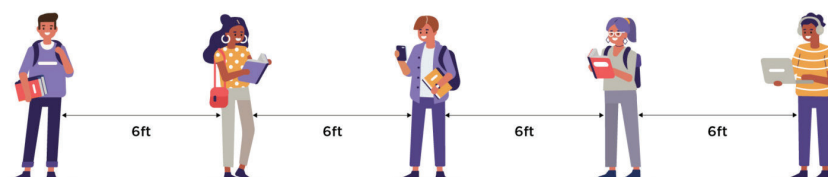
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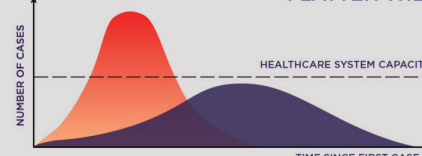
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COVID-19 Coronavirus

Rural health systems limited

from page 1

population within its radius," the letter says, reminding the public that moving those with COVID-19 poses a greater risk to health-care workers.

"We collectively have a lot of work to do and look forward to when this threat is behind us and we can all rest and truly enjoy our county again," the letter says. "Until then we ask that you recognize the limits of our local health-care system and consider remaining at your primary residence where you will receive more advanced care if you require it."

Some mayors in cottage country have been warning seasonal residents that the health-care system in the region doesn't have the capacity to handle an influx of patients. On Friday, Premier Doug Ford echoed those concerns.

Haliburton County Warden Liz Danielsen said the county has been encouraged by various sectors to ask the seasonal population to avoid the area, "but initially the county's Emergency Control Group has been reluctant to tell folks who own homes that they cannot come to them. We also did not have the tools to enforce people to stay away. We have to consider that these folks pay taxes on those properties and should reasonably be able to have the same rights as permanent residents. They look to those homes as safe havens and possibly better places to self isolate given our reduced population and rural setting."

She said information has gone out reminding cottagers that there is a limited ability to handle higher demand on services.

"In the last week I have sent out messaging (see county website) in the form of news releases and public service announcements on Canoe FM, telling cottagers that they should think about the fact that they could be putting themselves and others at risk given our facilities and health professionals' limited ability to handle an influx of illnesses," she said.

The county has also been urging people to practice physical distancing and avoid areas where people are gathering, last week reminding those who have returned from international travel that they must self-isolate for 14 days.

A coronavirus assessment centre is planned for the parking lot outside the Haliburton Family Medical Centre, which is to open this week.

In a weekly update from Haliburton Highlands Health Services for the week ending March 27 it is stated that supplies of personal protective equipment are running low and while they are sufficient to meet current demand, they are working with regional partners to secure more. They are also hoping to find more of this equipment from other sectors and members of the community.

On Sunday evening, Dr. Theresa Tam reiterated that those in cities should not travel to rural areas to wait out the pandemic. She tweeted: "Urban dwellers/cottagers should RESIST THE URGE to head to the #cottage and rural properties as these communities have less capacity to manage #COVID19. A) You need to #PlankTheCurve in the city ... B) "COVID19 time is NOT #cottage time"; #StayHome in the city and DO NOT put rural communities at further risk during the #COVID19 crisis."

COVID-19 assessment centre in the works for Haliburton

JENN WATT

Editor

Plans are underway to set-up a COVID-19 assessment centre at the Haliburton Family Medical Centre on Gelert Road starting Tuesday, March 31.

Patients will be seen by appointment only and first must go through the province's online or Telehealth Ontario's telephone assessment process. Those who are advised through that process to go to a community assessment centre will then call the Haliburton Family Medical Centre to arrange an appointment at 705-457-1212.

"It'll be an outdoor assessment, so patients won't get out of their car. They'll be assessed and at that point it'll be determined whether they need to have a COVID swab done or they need to go to the hospital for assessment or whether they go home and ride it out with phone follow-up," Dr. Norm Bottum of the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team said.

Medical professionals will be keeping in touch with those who are advised to go home.

Anyone with severe symptoms should call 911 and let the dispatcher know about the potential for COVID-19.

Setting up the assessment centre outdoors helps reduce the risk that the virus will spread.

"We don't want people getting out of their cars, so they're not coughing or sneezing on any surfaces; it minimizes the amount of protective equipment, the amount of cleaning that we actually have to do if people stay in

their cars," Dr. Bottum said.

Not everyone is being tested for the coronavirus in part because of processing capacity of Public Health Ontario and in part because of the availability of test kits.

"Basically at this point, only the patients that are the most unwell or at highest risk are going to be swabbed, but hopefully we will liberalize that over the next couple weeks," Dr. Bottum said.

Dr. Bottum said it's likely that Haliburton County will see cases of COVID-19 – there are some tests that are out awaiting results – which is why it's important to practice social distancing: limiting time in public spaces to only essential trips, keeping a two-metre distance from other people, coughing or sneezing into your elbow or a tissue, and washing your hands regularly and thoroughly.

"Social distancing is so important because people may be carrying it and not be aware of it," he said.

Those who have recently travelled outside Canada, have been in contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 or who are experiencing symptoms should self-isolate for 14 days. Those with symptoms should seek medical attention over the phone from their health provider.

The self-assessment for COVID-19 can be found on the Ministry of Health's website covid-19.ontario.ca/ self-assessment or the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit's website: hkpr.on.ca. Information about the assessment centre will also soon be added to the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team website: hhfhnt.com. Telehealth Ontario can be contacted at 1-866-797-0000 and the HKPR Health Unit's number is 1-866-888-4577, ext. 5020.

Thirty-five Pinecrest residents show symptoms

from page 1

The outbreak was declared after three residents tested positive for the virus, however, in line with provincial rules, no other residents were tested.

"In following our provincial outbreak guidelines, we did not do any additional tests on residents as we already had confirmation the virus was in the home," Dr. Lynn Noseworthy, medical officer of health for the HKPR Health Unit, said in a press release.

As of Friday, at least 35 residents of Pinecrest were displaying symptoms of the virus, which can have the most lethal effects in the elderly and those with compromised immune systems.

Additionally, as of March 30, 24 employees of the nursing home had tested positive for COVID-19, with test results for another 10 pending.

"Once the initial respiratory outbreak was declared, staff at Pinecrest followed all proper procedures to help contain the spread of the virus," the release reads. "Ill staff did not come to work, arrangements were made to have them tested and they were advised to self-isolate at home; residents were isolated as best they could be in the smaller facility; group activities were stopped; and meals were served to residents on trays rather than in the dining room."

The nursing home has been closed to visitors since March 14 to all but "compassionate visits," which typically mean people going to visit a relative at the end of their life.

"This is truly a horrible time for the families and friends of the residents, as well as our staff," Mary Carr, administrator of the Pinecrest Nursing Home, said in the release. "We have a number of medically fragile and vulnerable people living in our home; our residents are like family to our staff. Our sympathies go out to all of the families and friends of the people we have lost."

"This outbreak of COVID-19 is currently the largest outbreak in the province," Noseworthy said, "and really brings home how devastating and deadly this virus can be for older people in our communities. I am asking everyone to do everything they can to stop the spread of this virus – if not to protect yourself but to protect others who need our care."

Anyone who is feeling ill is encouraged to self-isolate and everyone is asked to practice physical distancing – staying at least two metres from one another – and regular and thorough hand-washing. Anyone over the age of 70 and anyone with a compromised immune system is also encouraged to self-isolate at home.

As of the afternoon of March 30, there were 41 confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the jurisdiction of the HKPR Health Unit, that jurisdiction including Haliburton County, Northumberland County and the City of Kawartha Lakes. Of those cases, 33 have been confirmed within the City of Kawartha Lakes, eight in Northumberland, and none within the County of Haliburton. There had been a total of nine COVID-19-related deaths in the jurisdiction – seven at Pinecrest itself and two others within the City of Kawartha Lakes, with one of those two deaths associated with visiting the Pinecrest Nursing Home.

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COVID-19 Coronavirus

Eagle Lake Country Market working for a safer environment

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

The family-run Eagle Lake Country Market is ensuring they're doing whatever it takes to provide enhanced safety for their 11 employees and shoppers during the coronavirus pandemic.

The week before the March Break, the store began to make changes. They used the deli meat sheets to cover debit machines, changing them after every use.

Shortly after, they enacted a new practice of telling customers to wash their hands at a new outdoor sink with running water and a hands-free soap dispenser and provided gloves, which were to be worn before entering and discarded upon leaving.

Signage was added with recommendations for social distancing, hand washing, and a sandwich board alerts customers of the store's new entry requirement. Cashiers, who are protected by a shield of plexiglass, are being told to change their gloves for every customer and if they leave their cash register they must change their gloves and sanitize their hands and put on new gloves before their new job.

Owner Nancy Elstone said these actions are important for the health of the community and are the right thing to do.

She said her efforts increased after she heard about school closures and the



A customer washes his hands before entering the Eagle Lake Country Market on Saturday, March 28. The store continues to add more measures to keep its employees and customers safe during the coronavirus pandemic. /DARREN LUM Staff

speeches by Premier Doug Ford and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau about new measures to slow the spread of COVID-19.

"It was a matter of what I could do to protect my staff and my community. They mentioned that hand washing was one of the most important things to do so, I thought, 'Well, let's set up a hand-wash sink and let's get everyone that comes in here to clean their hands, No. 1. And, let's provide gloves because let's try to keep our staff as safe as we can. Let's try to protect everyone here. Customers really appreciated that. They thought that was a great idea. And since then it just seems like it's progressing,'" she said.

The store has installed clear barriers at the checkout, separating customers and cashiers, who also have ultraviolet devices they can use to kill bacteria and

viruses.

None of the produce is handled before purchase. For example, the apples are sold in fours and are already bagged so they can be taken to the cash and weighed.

Elstone continues to think of new ways to improve safety, as the situation is constantly evolving.

"Three weeks ago, who would have known we were going to have screens at our check-out? So, it's progressing every day. It's a matter of trying to think ahead and take action," she said.

She's ordered face shields for her staff and the floor decals reminding people about social distancing are expected this week.

A local sewing club is making masks for staff. The club used to meet at the church across the road from the store.

Melissa Bacon is a front-end manager

and customer service manager who has worked at the store since 2012. Bacon admits to being a germaphobe and said it's comforting to know concerns will get addressed.

"If we need anything and we don't have it on hand or if we can't get it, [Elstone will] order it right away," she said. "She's great. She's very prompt with everything."

Bacon said her boss has "definitely gone above and beyond."

Every 30 to 45 minutes, depending on customer traffic, carts are sprayed down and washed, baskets and handles are wiped down with a cleaning solution. Everything that is touched is being cleaned, Bacon said.

"Some people in the beginning [before March Break] I found thought it was kind of a joke. I'm like, 'Nope, get the heck out.' I don't have a problem with telling people to get out and wash their hands," she said.

Another safety measure is online ordering and soon-to-be added, an after-hours private shopping option for large orders suitable for one or two weeks.

Elstone said the concept could apply to one person or a couple who would shop when the store is completely empty of other customers. Phone for more details.

"Anything is on the table to make people feel more comfortable and safe," she said.

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- Order your prescription medication.
- Practice cough and sneeze etiquette in transit.

If you have symptoms, take the self-assessment at ontario.ca/coronavirus. Or call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY: 1-866-797-0007) or your public health unit.

COVID-19

Coronavirus

Demand at county food banks growing

CHAD INGRAM

Staff Reporter

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a number of Haliburton County residents have been laid off of work, and local food banks are experiencing an increase in demand.

"We anticipate demands (and costs) at the food bank are going to grow significantly," David Ogilvie, chair of the board for the **4Cs Food Bank and Lily Ann** told the *Echo* in an email. "Sadly, we made the decision to close the Lily Ann Thrift Store which is a significant source of our funding. We would ask people to hold off making drop offs until we are able to resume normal store operations."

Ogilvie said demand at the food bank is up some 20 per cent.

"We have been busy with our regular clients plus a high percentage – over 20 per cent – of new clients and folk who have not used the food bank for many months," he wrote. "We expect this trend to ramp up until promised government plans start to take effect."

The federal government has announced a series of financial aid measures to assist those whose income has been affected by the ongoing pandemic.

The 4Cs is currently maintaining its regular hours – open Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. – but has modified its operations to minimize human contact. Clients are not permitted to enter the food bank, but rather, are served one at a time from the door. Also, rather than choosing foods, for the time being, food is coming in the form of pre-packed boxes.

"The distribution of the Good Food Box was delayed by a week this month and we are anticipating it will also continue as scheduled with a slightly modified pick up process," Ogilvie added.

At this time, cash donations – which can be made online – are preferred over donations of actual food items. "At this time we would prefer cash as accepting food donations presents physical challenges," Ogilvie wrote.

More information and the food bank's mailing address can be found on its website at www.haliburton4cs.org and e-transfers can be made to 4csfoodbank@gmail.com.

"We have assisted five people who have lost their jobs," said Joanne Barnes, manager of the **Minden Community Food**



SIRCH volunteer Chris Lynd applies labels to containers of soup, which are part of the collection of SIRCH frozen meals available for pick-up on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at SIRCH Central, located at 2 Victoria Street in Haliburton. The meals are prepared and packaged using COVID-19 protocols. Meals will be put into bags and given to people at the entranceway of SIRCH Central. SIRCH meals can also be requested at food banks./DARREN LUM Staff

Bank. "I expect this number to increase steadily beginning [this] week. No one is allowed into the facility. We fill the order and leave products loose in [a] shopping cart. We push it out the front door and clients pack their order. When [the] cart is empty we bring it just inside the door and sanitize it completely before using it again."

"We are well stocked and also have a surplus of meals ready for whatever happens," Barnes said. "We continue with the highest number of clients in our history."

More than 225 families rely on Minden's food bank. It remains open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. The phone number for the Minden Community Food Bank is 705-286-6838.

The **Central Food Network** operates the food banks in Wilberforce (the Highlands East Food Hub) and Cardiff, as well as Heat Bank Haliburton County.

"The Central Food Network takes the health and safety of its volunteers, staff and people accessing services very seriously," reads a statement from CFN. "We are mindful of the efforts being undertaken to stymie the spread of COVID-19 and our responsibility to aid in those efforts while also continuing to address

food- and heat-insecurity in our community. With concerns growing about COVID-19, we wish to provide an update on our actions to date and our response plan."

The existing hours at the Wilberforce and Cardiff food banks will remain in effect for existing members only. Anyone who is not a member but requires help with food is asked to call 705-448-9711.

For existing members, service is transitioning to a hamper-style service, where clients will be asked to wait outside while a volunteer provides them with a food hamper. Everyone is asked to remain at least two metres from one another, and anyone feeling ill is asked not to attend the food banks, but to call 705-448-9711 to discuss options.

Heat Bank Haliburton County is suspending home deliveries for the time being. Staff continue to be available at 705-306-0565 or at heatbankhc@gmail.com.

SIRCH Community Services has provided frozen meals for a number of years through its Community Kitchen program, but intends to ramp up production of those meals to assist county residents during the pandemic. Those meals will be

delivered to local food banks, and can also be picked up from SIRCH Central, which is located at 2 Victoria St. in Haliburton Village, next to the laundromat. SIRCH Central will be open every Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. and meals can be picked up during that time.

"We will be using social distancing protocols to help keep people safe. We prepare and package the meals under the very strict COVID-19 protocols to ensure meals are prepared in compliance with the latest food-handling and sanitation guidelines," reads a release from SIRCH. "No one will be allowed inside the building. The meals will be put into bags and brought out to you."

SIRCH has no base funding for the provision of these meals and is looking for community donations to continue providing the service. Donations can be made online at 22.sirch.on.on/donate with Visa or Mastercard, or by phoning 705-457-1742 with either credit card. Cheques can be mailed to SIRCH Community Services at Box 687, Haliburton, ON, K0M 1S0. E-transfers can be made to stacy_mclean@sirch.on.ca. For more information, visit www.sirch.on.ca or SIRCH's Facebook page.

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COVID-19 Coronavirus

Financial pressures, social isolation presenting mental health challenges

Mental health supports available for residents of Haliburton County

JENN WATT

Editor

Mental health service providers in Haliburton County are reaching out to residents to remind them that help is available as the coronavirus pandemic increases the number of stressors people are dealing with.

"We know that people who may not have experienced anxiety to this degree right now might be experiencing more," Marg Cox, executive director of Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents, said.

"People are experiencing a lot of unknowns in terms of their employment and what that does in terms of food security and housing. And people are also needing to keep their social distance, they're more isolated and we know with high levels of poverty in our county and not 100 per cent [internet] connectivity that people are more isolated than ever."

Several new or intensified stressors arriving at once means more people in the county potentially needing mental health assistance.

Beverlee Groves-Foley, clinical manager of Mental Health Services at Haliburton Highlands Health Services, said they've seen more demand from new clients.

"I think most of our intake this week, honestly, has been new clients to our system with not being able to manage their stressors on finance and anxiety," she said.

HHHS Mental Health Services is at full staffing levels and is using phone and video conferencing to speak with most people. For those who must be seen in-person, screening is being conducted and staff wear personal protective equipment. No referrals are necessary.

To alleviate some pressure on emergency departments,

those in crisis are asked to call HHHS Mental Health Services during business hours at 705-286-4575 or Four-County Crisis 24-7 at 1-866-995-9933.

Point in Time, which offers services for youth, is also using phone, video, and text messaging to meet with clients. They are offering crisis services during business hours and the youth hub staff are also offering the same support, but also not in-person. Refurbished cellphones as well as phone cards are available for those who need them.

"We're working to get that out to people and we're also working to support families if they have more instrumental needs in terms of gas cards and grocery cards. Again, not in any way trying to duplicate the good work of the food banks and other organizations that are also supporting people," Cox said.

Quick access clinics, which can provide a much needed check-in for youth and families, are available too. Point in Time is taking new clients.

Cox said there are steps people can take to help alleviate some of the stress that physical distancing and self-isolation can impose. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the news, she recommends limiting yourself to a few trusted websites. For those who find that to be too much, ask a friend to filter the news for you.

Routines can help ward off feelings of anxiety and depression. "So whether you're living on your own and you've been laid off because of a COVID-related thing, or just seasonal employment here in the Highlands, think about what kind of routine you can get yourself into," Cox said.

Other helpful behaviours include getting enough sleep, physical activity, eating well and connecting with people. Going for hour-long walks has been proven to reduce depression as effectively as medication for some

people, she said. Using technology that allows you to see someone's face can also make you feel like you're making more of a connection.

"If you're needing to do it by text or phone, it's still absolutely better than not connecting with people," she said.

A local group of health service providers will be launching a website called Haliburtoncares.ca, which will feature resources available in the county. Groves-Foley said webinars on isolation, anxiety and grief will be uploaded as well as materials from Point in Time and other groups.

Cox and Groves-Foley pointed out that the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic is different for everyone and that for those who have fewer financial resources at their disposal, there are more barriers to overcome.

Those who may have relied on computers at the library or would have gone to Tim Hortons and sat in the restaurant while accessing the internet on their phones no longer have those resources, Groves-Foley said. "It's really widened the gap between the have and have-not," Cox agreed.

Both organizations are working to find ways to support all of their clients and encourage anyone who is struggling to reach out. "We are here for people," Cox said.

How to reach them:

HHHS Mental Health Services 705-286-4575
HHHS Community Support Services 705-457-2941,
www.hhhs.ca/community-support-services
Four County Crisis (24-7) 1-866-995-9933
Point in Time 705-457-5345, pointintime.ca
Haliburton County Youth Hub 705-306-5199

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Published by White Pine Media Corp



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Forever in our memories: Creighton Feir

Back to normal

AS WE BEGIN to learn in the next week how much our efforts of physical distancing have prevented the spread of the coronavirus, the question asked since public health officials first advised us to avoid contact with each other by self-isolating lingers: when will we get back to normal?

But what we might have considered normal has changed, and while eventually over weeks, or months, some aspects of our daily life will return to what we have known, some things might have changed forever – and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

For many, being forced into a life less busy could result in personal change and growth. No one is expected to write their memoir at a time when a global pandemic is spreading waves of grief and anxiety throughout the world. But over time, with what Fred Penner referred to as “extra time,” in his online concert this week, many of us will have had the break we needed from a hectic routine that celebrated busy over time spent really pausing to care for ourselves and for others, and to connect with what might have been left aside in the daily rush.

We are remembering to make time for phone calls and face-to-face video chats in which we really use technology to connect rather than be distracted. We are looking out for each other and those who need support that we might not have considered while we've rushed from home to school to meetings to work to practice to events. We are realizing that what is most important for us in this time is health, and keeping ourselves and others well by being active, finding calm, and connecting with each other.

In having the experience of facing the same crisis with each other, we are learning about others. We might not have truly grasped before the lives led and decisions made by our friends who live paycheck-to-pay-

cheque; by both kids and adults who live in abusive situations; by entrepreneurs and business owners who make decisions that affect others every day; about caregivers and people with disabilities who live in a world that can be unsafe and inconvenient on a daily basis; about people with substance use challenges, including alcohol dependence that makes lack of access to alcohol dangerous; about the valued work teachers do and the importance of a social safety net for all; about the essential work some of our most low-paid neighbours do, and the risk our frontline workers take in trying to protect and help others.

We are learning about our impact on the world, seeing true evidence of the environmental changes we can make by telecommuting, enjoying some downtime, staying local, and reducing what we buy. We are learning about our impact on each other, by acknowledging the peace we find in enjoying the arts, and the effect we can have by supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs and farmers; or waving to our elders through a window.

We are learning about how much our vote matters, and how much strong leadership that can work together matters not just in crisis, but every day, to provide support, security and a better life for our most vulnerable because just like in the time of a pandemic, we can all live better lives when everyone is equipped to feel safe.

“The lesson we are learning from #COVID19 pandemic is that none of us can be safe and healthy unless we are making sure that all of us, worldwide, are safe and healthy,” reads part of Canada's chief public health officer Dr. Theresa Tam's March 26 tweet on physical distancing. “No Canadian will be safe and healthy unless we make sure that all Canadians are protected.”

That is true now, and that will be true in the future, regardless of what our new normal looks like.



sue
tiffin

Editorial

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Green Lake at sunset

by Darren Lum

Under the table

MURRAY WAS afraid. He had retreated to under the kitchen table hoping it would be safe to come out soon. Carol watched him from her chair in the living room. She knew exactly what was going on.

It had started earlier as the two of them sat enjoying their usual early morning routine of coffee and conversation by the fire. Murray had been sprawled on the rug with his favourite toy when he had suddenly stopped, raised his head and started looking around. Ears perked, he spotted something Carol couldn't see, something around the window where the golden sunlight streamed in. Then she saw it. A fly, roused from its winter slumber, was making its presence known and terrifying the dog.

Once Murray saw it, he immediately moved to the kitchen table. Protection was what he needed because he had been stung once by one of these small flying monsters and didn't want a repeat this morning.

Carol told him it wasn't a bee but a fly and they don't bite. But he paid no heed. He remembered that incident last summer when the two of them were outside on the back deck. Bees were around the flowers and when one flew near the planter, Murray snapped it into his mouth.

Up until then, he had been enjoying watching the flying and crawling things. He would watch them and, showing how quick he could be, catch some in mid-flight with a show of speed and focus. Until he caught the wrong one. Little did he know the bee wasn't interested in him, just the flowers. And the little creature would give up its life when it stung the inside of Murray's mouth.

It had only taken that one experience to teach the dog that a small flying thing could hurt. So he wanted to avoid any contact. But at the same time, he was conflicted. Because besides eating, sleeping and playing, his job was to protect Carol. When someone came to the door, Murray immediately warned her of the potential danger. Anyone walking by on the street also posed a threat and Murray was very good at warning them off.

However he also knew that protection went both ways. While he was engineered to protect her, she also protected him. He saw that every day on their walks. With his hackles raised like spiky flags, he would snarl and threaten any other leashed dog they came across in their travels.

It was another story if the dog appeared to be on its own and therefore unpredictably dangerous. On those occasions Murray would pull back from his wanderings to walk right beside Carol's leg on the side farthest from the other animal. It was like he was trying to make himself invisible. Being a very small dog meant he could do this with some degree of success. Once the danger had passed

he returned to his usual position slightly out front, tail up and ears forward.

Once a big noisy dog had come charging at them from someone's driveway. Before Murray could even think, Carol had scooped him up with one arm and held him close, high up where the scary creature couldn't reach him. And she had yelled louder than Murray had ever heard so that the other dog abruptly halted then turned and ran back up the driveway. When

Carol put Murray back down, he walked with added confidence and sprightly step, knowing he would always be safe with Carol around.

But he knew she couldn't protect him from everything. Sometimes the small things you don't see coming can be the most scary. Like that bee he had thought was just like a fly. Only it wasn't and it had hurt him. So now he preferred to take no chances and stay under the kitchen table. Eventually the flying, buzzing thing would go away and he could come out. So he would wait it out. If only Carol was not so far away in that chair. Maybe if he made a run for it he could hop on her lap, feel that strong human arm around him and feel safe once more. Still, it was probably better to stay where he was. At least for now.

Down



sharon
lynch

Our road

points of view

Social distancing made easier

THE OTHER DAY I was driving my car past the Head Lake boardwalk trail in town when I noticed four people each standing at least five yards apart in a square.

They appeared to be having a pleasant conversation off the side of the road. My first instinct told me I was looking at an informal gathering of the National Association of Garlic Enthusiasts. Or perhaps a secret meeting of the International Order of Gingivitis Sufferers. But, of course, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we don't get the glamorous conventions we used to.

It turns out those four people were merely practicing responsible social distancing.

This is, of course, fine and dandy, and even the right thing to do given the circumstances. But it also occurred to me that this conversing from afar cannot be easy. And the older you get, the more difficult it must be. For instance, these days I turn my TV volume up to 11.

Make no mistake. There are even pitfalls to this type of long distance talking for the young. After all, conversations like this could easily be disrupted by heavy gusts of wind or something as simple as passing flocks of yappy birds.

This seems like a minor inconvenience, I know, especially when compared to the risk of transmitting COVID-19. But let's not forget miscommunication also has its perils.

Let's assume, for instance, that, at the critical part of a conversation, someone uttered the commonly-used sentence, "I have been learning a lot about asteroids lately."

It sounds innocent enough. But, what if, just as the word "asteroid" left their lips, a low flying goose passed between the speaker and the listeners and honked loudly?

I think you know where I'm going with this.

In a situation like this, it's fairly reasonable to assume that the sentence might easily be misconstrued because of the goose's unfortunate timing. Suddenly, it would go from a completely innocent sentence to something not normally talked about in polite company that is, frankly, quite offensive.

Yet, to recap, all the person vocalizing it meant to say was "I have been learning a lot about asteroids lately." Sadly, however, all the people listening through that goose noise would hear is, "When this is over, we should all get together for some kale and tofu."

And, just like that, some poor person's reputation would be forever ruined.

That's why I think that, for all our sake's, when we have conversations where we must remain a small distance apart, it would probably be best to use a more practical method of communication.

I'm thinking semaphore, which the less intelligent among us refer to as signal flaggery.

Sure, signal flaggery is not an easy language to learn. But, let's be honest, we all have plenty of time these days, don't we?

I would have suggested texting but I think most of us have had enough autocorrect-induced errors to think twice about that.

No, signal flaggery is definitely the way to go. Sure, it's going to take some time to learn but I think the results will be well worth it, especially if we are told to separate even further.

I know communicating by flags is not easy because I practiced with Jenn the other day using nothing more than tea towels. Yet, no matter how clearly I signal to her, when I asked her to translate what I signaled, she always seems to read "Dear God. Why me?"

The good news is, we are both stuck at home. So, we can keep on practicing until I get it right.



steve
galea

Loon Tales



pic of the past

This photo, from *Haliburton: A History in Pictures*, is of the Laking Camp 6, one of a series of camps owned by the William Laking Lumber Company east of Drag Lake. The photo is from about 1910. The book says a camp would have typically included sleeping quarters, a cookery, blacksmith shop, office and stables.

letters to the editor

Let's show our support

To the Editor,

This letter is not about the coronavirus it is about community support. This community has come under attack with something we have never seen before. This posting is on behalf of all of our small businesses who are being devastated by having to either shut their doors completely or offering minimal services (restaurants doing only take-out if they even open at all).

These are the same doors that we as a community knock on for donations. They support this community for fundraisers, children's programs, charity events and the list goes on ... I am one of those door-knockers on behalf of our local Lions

Club. So this is my message to all my fellow residents: Don't let us let them down! If you can order take-out then do it! If you have some extra money then donate to our local Food Bank or Heat Bank, or Fuel for Warmth or Food for Kids program, the Legion etc, and when their doors open again and we are free to come and go I want items flying off the shelves and not because we are afraid to run out! I want our restaurants full to capacity. Let us knock down their doors instead of the other way around. Haliburton is not just another place hit by coronavirus, it is a place that hits back.

Kathryn Kidd
Haliburton

Stay away from the cottage for now

To the Editor,

You can't outrun it. So please don't try.

If you are like myself, a cottager, this letter is meant for you.

I appreciate why you may wish to open your cottage early and flee the city thinking you can escape the COVID-19 pandemic. We are very fortunate to have a choice and I'm writing to suggest, strongly, that the wiser choice is to stay home where you have ample resources and access to medical aid if you or a family member require help.

Just think about it. This virus has spread to more than 160 countries across the world in a mat-

ter of weeks. You can't outrun it. None of us can. But you can overwhelm the grocery stores and pharmacies in our beloved cottage country.

You can put our nurses and doctors and all the staff who keep us safe each summer in more danger. And you can overload the fragile infrastructure that is desperately trying to take care of the people who live here year-round and call it "Home."

It's this simple: We can't outrun our fear. We can only face it. Please. Stay home. Keep yourself and our loved ones safe.

Thank you.

Sue Bright



Have a thought, comment or opinion
you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
jenn@haliburtonpress.com

COVID-19

Coronavirus

When the cottage is off limits

JANET TRULL

Special to the Echo

In troubled times, the family cottage seems like a sanctuary. But last week Doug Ford asked people to stay away from their seasonal residences so they do not overwhelm small communities with limited resources. Wherever you are sheltering this spring, keep a little Highlands in your heart. It's here, waiting for a summer that we will all appreciate more than usual. From personal experience, I know that just thinking about the cottage can be a great comfort.

When I was a little girl, growing up near Lake Erie, we experienced a similar kind of generalized anxiety with riots, protests, lynchings and wars. Bad things south of the border were brought to us every evening at six o'clock, courtesy of Irv Weinstein, the pock-marked newscaster on Buffalo's Channel 2.

Those events didn't seem any more real to me than the gunfights on Bonanza. Kids don't get worried until the adults get worried.

In 1963, they got worried. My teacher cried and sent us outside for an early recess after announcing that President Kennedy had been shot. My father sat in his big chair and wept during the president's funeral. For baby boomers, Kennedy's assassination marked the moment we noticed that the grown-ups were shaken up. The world must be coming to an end.

There were weekly siren drills. Wednesdays at noon, the town siren would blast its emergency message. If it wasn't Wednesday at noon when you heard the siren, you'd better kneel down and tuck your head between your knees and start praying. The bomb was already whistling through the air, coming direct from the U.S.S.R. to blow up Niagara Falls.

When Channel 2 showed people digging holes in their backyards to build bomb shelters, my dad got busy. Our house had originally been heated by coal. Big old dirty coal furnaces were nasty things with pot bellies that lurked in the corners of dark, spider-

webby basements. Coal trucks emptied their dusty black loads into a coal bin. Our coal bin had been sitting empty since we installed a new oil furnace.

Dad swept out the bin. He put a few cases of canned goods in it, and a bench along either side, and a flashlight. I'm guessing the coal bin measured about six feet square, and four feet high. He invited us to try it out. I remember the horror of considering that we should all enter this cement tomb and close the heavy door.

"I'll take my chances with the bomb, Bob," my mother told him. "Kids. Don't you dare go in there. It's dirty. That coal dust will never come out of your clothes. Really, Bob! What were you thinking?"

When it came to commands, my mother's trumped my father's every time. He knew better than to argue.



Together apart

LYNDA SHADBOLT

Special to the Echo

The world needs music and art now more than ever. We need the beauty, the inspiration, the creativity, the aliveness, the hope. We've been physical distancing for two weeks and we are all settling into new normals. We have up days and down days. We go from hope to fear to sadness to hope to faith. We are all feeling a lot. And so when someone organizes something that is uplifting, connects us and is delightful we are appreciative.

This article is being written from my living room where my husband and I just enjoyed an hour of live music sponsored by the The Haliburton County Folk Society. Nick Russell and Benton Brown were broadcasting live through Facebook from the Canoe FM concert hall. They played a blend of covers and original music and it was fantastic. This is a beautiful example of people rising to create new possibilities during this time of the COVID virus. The Folk Society partnered with Nick and Benton and Canoe FM and, when they set the evening up they promoted it to encourage listeners to get take out dinner and support local restaurants. That is so, so, so beautiful. So much careful thought for the entire community.

There were so many things about this concert that made me smile. First of all, Benton and Nick are both gifted performers and their music was outstanding. But more than that, they are so kind and positive to each other and it was fun to watch them interact. They were performing live and people were posting

comments as the show progressed. At one point Benton acknowledged that he needs to get better at using technology (he was trying to follow some posts). That made my whole evening because I feel like a dinosaur trying to figure out the technology as I try to offer some yoga classes online. I realized in that moment that I am not alone! And he is young and I'm, well, older, and I always think my age is why I struggle with technology.

We are all experiencing new normals, trying new ways of connecting and really living our lives in non-traditional ways. As we sat watching the concert, I couldn't help but reflect on how simple our lives have become, and how much I appreciate small things now. The Haliburton County Folk Society gave us an opportunity to be together, even though we are apart. I followed comments as people posted them and at one point I realized our young neighbours were curled up on the couch listening as well. I saw comments from other friends who I haven't seen in a couple of weeks. The whole hour was heartwarming, uplifting and delightful. I felt connected to our county and to the world as people tuned in from all over.

Once again I am so grateful to live in a community that continues to be creative, supportive and full of hope in times of adversity. We will get through this challenging time. We are connected even though we are apart as we practice physical distancing. Stay strong everyone. If you want to watch the concert you can go to Facebook and go to the 100.9 Canoe FM Community Radio page.

"Well, kids," he said. "It's here if we need it."

I looked at my mother. She shook her head.

The coal bin created in me the same kind of anxiety that many people are experiencing today with the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents want to reassure their kids, but they are not entirely convincing. The schools are closed. Schools! Those institutions where generations of parents have sent their children, knowing they will be safe. All the crafts and Disney movies in the world cannot fool the kids into thinking that nothing is wrong.

One day I asked my father what we would do if there really was a bomb. And he said, without hesitation, "We'll go to Haliburton."

Now, as far as nuclear fallout goes, we would have been no safer in Haliburton than if we stayed in Dunnville. But I did not know that. The cottage was "way up north." A magical place with a hammock and a climbing rock and deer who visited in the early morning mist. Lapping water at the end of the dock. A crackling fire in the grate. Cozy beds with flannel sheets and bedrooms without ceilings, so we could fall asleep to the reassuring sounds of grown-ups playing gin rummy. It would be a safe place to wait out any global threat. I felt better just imagining myself there.

Here in Haliburton County, the snow is slowly melting. Lakes are awakening with sonic rumblings. Yesterday we saw bear paw prints in the snow. Hibernation for the bears is over. They are out of quarantine!

And, before long, we will be too. The lights of the cottages will wink on. Children's laughter as they jump off the end of the dock will sound especially joyful. There is nothing better, after being away, than seeing the "You are Entering Haliburton County" sign. Like a refugee crossing the border into a bountiful land of blue lakes and rocky shores, it never fails to flood me with the feeling that everything will be OK.

Stay safe, summer friends. See you soon.

Inward Bound

When Covid struck in 2020, March
And cancellations happened by the score,
When contact intimate was out of touch,
Rehearsals cut, events long planned – no more.
With medical & entertainment down
And store and church were closed, as with a frown,
And walks to neighbours doors to ring a bell
And call to outdoor service rang its kneel,
Then TV movies came into its own,
Or ping-pong, crokinole were played a new,
When phone calls unexpected came to bless
The emptiness with spoken words' caress
O then we longed for dear ones' company
And sitting down with friends for cups of tea.
by Eleanor Cooper

March Time

Hail, oh March of blustery charm
In like a lamb
On a day that was warm.

Now you're turned to lion's roar
To end your days
With storm in store.

Dear, dear March, you clear the air
Yours in refreshment beyond compare.

Hail and farewell to your windy ways
In everyone of your thirty-one days.

by Eleanor Cooper

COVID-19 Coronavirus

COVID-19 preparation work underway at HHHS

JENN WATT

Editor

Haliburton Highlands Health Services is working on reorganizing its facilities in preparation for potential pressures from COVID-19.

An update from president and CEO Carolyn Plummer released on the weekend outlines a number of measures being taken including a bed and patient flow plan, reconfiguring emergency departments to make space for screening and

proper distance between patients, moving ultrasound services in Minden to the Family Health Team space, and expediting patients waiting for long-term care placements to open up acute care beds.

The acute care unit in Haliburton may be expanded and HHHS is looking at creating an acute care space in Minden.

On the topic of supplies, Plummer said that personal protective equipment is running low, although there are sufficient supplies for the current demand. They are "reaching out to the community at large and any other sectors or retailers

that are not health service providers who may have a supply of PPE on hand," the update says. They are also working with regional partners to secure supplies.

Visitors and staff entering HHHS buildings are being screened and staff who have any symptoms are not allowed to work and must go home to self-isolate. Visitors are restricted except for in exceptional circumstances. Long-term care activities have been enhanced to provide more stimulation for residents and video technology is helping to connect them to family.

To ensure staffing levels are adequate, current staff workloads are being reviewed and HHHS has put out a call to retired or relocated health-care personnel who might join the COVID-19 effort locally. Recruiting for housekeeping and screening is ongoing.

"We are deeply grateful to the members of our team and everyone who supports them, as they have stepped up to the plate in so many ways, all while continuing to provide excellent care to clients, patients, and residents at our facilities," Plummer said.

Are you a retired health-care worker? HHHS could use your help

Haliburton Highlands Health Services is asking those in the health-care field who may not be working right now to consider helping with the local COVID-19 response.

On Tuesday, HHHS put out an appeal for health-care workers, such as those who have relocated or are retired, to consider contacting HHHS's human resources manager. Nurses and personal care workers such as home support workers, personal care attendants, and dental hygienists were listed as being in high demand.

"While we are currently able to meet

the staffing needs with our existing complement of health-care workers, we have been learning from the experience of other jurisdictions locally and internationally, and recognize the need to be proactive in ensuring we have staffing resources for the anticipated increase in need as this situation progresses," Carolyn Plummer, president and CEO of HHHS, said.

Training and orientation is provided.

Health-care workers interested in helping with the COVID-19 response are to contact Carl Carr, human resources manager at HHHS, at hr@hhhs.ca or call 705-457-1392 ext. 2254.



Banking at a distance

Customers stand outside spaced apart before they can enter the Bank of Montreal in Haliburton on Friday, March 27, following through with physical distancing to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. /DARREN LUM Staff

Throw Pillow \$25⁸⁵

Star Pillow \$45⁶⁷

Plush Rocker \$79⁹⁹

Scandinavian Armchair \$325⁸⁵

Modular Storage \$17⁹⁹ each

Area Rug \$251⁷⁵

Wooden Train Set \$145⁹⁵

Bunny Plush Toy \$28⁵⁰

Baubles Lights \$18⁹⁵

Geometric Pillow \$29⁷⁷

Sun Pillow \$35⁸⁵

Tee-Pee Tent \$119⁸⁵

You choose what they chew. **MILK-BONE**

‘What is one night for me to sleep in my car?’

Fundraiser brings awareness of homelessness

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

For all the rugged outdoor beauty of the Highlands, there is a challenging reality that faces many in this area: homelessness.

The second Sleeping in Cars event – in which participants collect pledges and sleep in their vehicle overnight, mimicking what some have to do for shelter in the area – was officially cancelled this year due to efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Despite the cancellation, the event went ahead for three individuals, who slept in vehicles this past Friday helping to raise \$2,347 for the non-profit Places for People, which works to secure affordable rental housing in Haliburton County for those at risk of homelessness, and supports its tenants to make a positive difference in their lives.

Last year’s event, which was held in township parking lots in Minden, Haliburton and Wilberforce, not only raised \$6,000 for Places for People, but it also raised awareness of housing shortages.

Carnarvon’s Kim Switzer is not just an outspoken advocate for Places for People, but is a beneficiary of the organization’s effort, as a resident at the duplex owned by the organization.

Her experience makes it easy to spend the night in her truck with her 10-year-old daughter Hailey for the fundraiser.

“I’ve been without a home myself and I’ve been blessed to have this [residence]. We need more of this in our community,” she said. “What is one night for me to sleep in my car, really? To raise awareness and kind of spread the word and to help get a bit of money fundraised ... I couldn’t



Sylvia Claridge, left, and Val Jarvis show off their sleeping arrangements for their version of the Sleeping in Cars event, which was carried out in private driveways such as Jarvis’s on Friday, March 27. Along with Kim Switzer, these participants helped to raise \$2,347 for Places for People, a charity that works to secure affordable rental housing in Haliburton County for those at risk of homelessness, and supports its tenants to make a positive difference in their lives. /DARREN LUM Staff

do this and I couldn’t do what I’m doing for my children right now if it wasn’t for Places for People,” she said. “I’d love to do more. If everybody did a little bit more ... maybe it wouldn’t be such a huge thing, but there’s too much homelessness and youth without places to go and it’s crazy.”

It’s been two-and-a-half years since she moved into the three bedroom, two bathroom unit with a backyard for her children. She continues to be grateful for the

opportunity to get her life on track after a divorce left her with nothing.

She’s not sure how it happened, but is glad it did for her and her family.

“I have no idea other than some kind of blessing this place came up. I thought I was going to be bounced over to Fene-lon Falls and [have to live in] some little ... rundown apartment type of thing. I had no idea what was going to happen. For whatever reason this place came up. It’s taken me a long time to call it home, but

it’s been awesome and I’m truly blessed and I’m truly thankful to have it,” she said.

Life hasn’t been perfect since moving in, but she’s adjusted and made it home.

“Without it I don’t know where I’d be,” she said.

Switzer was left with few options several years ago.

With a Grade 12 education and being

see page 11

Canada’s #1
Most Treated
Brand



Long lasting treats

Good for anytime

Help keep teeth strong

People facing homelessness often end up in precarious situations

from page 10

a stay-at-home mother, who home schooled her children for 12 years, Switzer ended up at the YWCA shelter where she lived for several months with her three children, worried for the future, terrified of not having a home.

Having the home has enabled her to work through challenges. The security of a safe place helped her to go back to school, completing courses at Fleming College, obtaining certificates in wilderness and outdoor courses.

"It has allowed me to grow and is still allowing me to grow," she said.

It led to her forming her own service business two years ago, doing work at residences or at Airbnbs such as landscaping, cleaning, or taking garbage to the landfill.

"It's really what does somebody need? Do they need a helping hand because I know what it's like to not have help," she said.

The other participants were Sylvia Claridge and Val Jarvis, who invited Claridge to join her in her driveway for the evening. Claridge was the top fundraiser for the second consecutive year, having raised \$1,012 for Places for People.

They both knew harrowing stories of young people who didn't have alternatives to being homeless. One was a teenage boy sleeping in a bank lobby in Haliburton because of a fight with his mother, who he reconciled with later.

Another was a young man in his 20s, who slept in a field in Carnarvon during the winter with the temperatures well below freezing. His only method of protecting himself against the elements was to cover up with a tarp and old coats for



Sylvia Claridge was the top fundraiser for this year's Sleeping in Cars event with \$1,012 raised. Officially the Sleeping in Cars event was cancelled, but Claridge, Val Jarvis and Kim Switzer continued the effort to raise awareness of homelessness and money for Places for People. /DARREN LUM Staff

warmth, lying on a pallet.

Claridge visited him and tried to help, giving food. His only fear was wolves, she said. He slept with a knife. Sometimes he would seek shelter in cabins so he could eat his canned beans, which would otherwise freeze outside.

Places for People's vice-president Fay Martin said she was grateful to these people for sleeping in their cars and taking pledges on their own. During this time when the message is to go home, it's difficult for some people, she said.

"To me, this is a huge thing. We say, 'Go home. Go home. Go home.' But what if you don't have a home, right? What if

the home you have is like not a healthy place to be, either socially or physically healthy place to be? Then you're kind of up the creek without a paddle," she said. "I think with just the ease with which we say, 'Go home. Go home. Go home' as if everybody has one. When we know everybody doesn't have one ... to me there is that irony. It just doesn't feel like the right time to kind of go all preachy about that because everyone is so preoccupied with other things."

She was in favour of people sleeping in cars for the fundraiser as long as it was abiding by the coronavirus safety protocols.

“

We say, 'Go home. Go home. Go home.' But what if you don't have a home, right?

— Fay Martin
Vice-president, Places for People

Switzer, who has volunteered to work with high school students, said there are a lot of youth who are "couch hopping" and need places to go and things to do. She wishes there were more affordable accommodations available.

In speaking with people, she said there are some women who stay in abusive relationships to "have a roof over their heads. That's not good, but where else are they going to go? What else can they afford?"

She wishes people unfamiliar with what challenges youth face, whether it's a home life that isn't stable due to a lack of finances or abuse they face, would open their eyes.

"Maybe we don't see the stuff like we see in Toronto where there's sleeping bags on the side of the road, but who's to say that isn't happening in some places. Maybe we don't know too much about it all?" she said.

If interested in donating, see www.placesforpeople.ca.

Throw Pillow \$25⁸⁵ each

Pine Daybed \$420⁹⁹

Magazines \$21⁹⁸ each

House Slippers \$18⁶⁷

Knit Planter Cover \$34²⁹

House Plants \$25⁰⁹ each

Coffee Table \$36⁹⁹

Throw Pillow \$25⁸⁵ each

Waffle Knit Blanket \$62⁹²

Suede Couch \$586⁹⁹

House Plant \$132⁷⁶ each

Straw Woven Seat \$34²⁰

Sheepskin Rug \$131⁹⁸

You choose what they chew. **MILK-BONE**



A fire on March 25 gutted a cottage on Kennisis Lake. No one was home at the time and there were no injuries. / Photos submitted



Fire destroys Kennisis Lake cottage

A seasonal residence on Wilkinson Road, Kennisis Lake, was fully engulfed by fire when firefighters arrived on Wednesday, March 25 at about 2 p.m.

The Dysart et al Fire Department responded to the call, which came in at 1:22 p.m., with seven fire trucks and 21 firefighters, who worked to extinguish the fire

and protect the surrounding cottages.

"Nobody was present at the residence when the fire started, [and] no injuries were sustained by firefighters or bystanders," Mike Iles, fire chief, said.

The fire was reported by someone driving by who saw smoke coming from the eaves of the building. The cot-

tage is a total loss of approximately \$350,000, the fire department report says.

The cause is undetermined and the fire marshal will not be investigating.



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Transportation industry

To all those providing services to tackle COVID-19
and all those helping our community,

thank you.



Elementary teachers reach agreement with province

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and the province reached a tentative contract deal on March 20 for teachers and education workers after months of negotiations and job action.

Details about the contract agreement have not been announced. Issues important to ETFO were protecting the kindergarten program, teacher compensation, smaller class sizes, and resources for students with special needs.

"This has been a very prolonged and

difficult bargaining process," said ETFO president Sam Hammond in a press release issued that day. "We are very grateful for the support and unwavering solidarity of our members, and the public who have continued to stand up for public education and the supports that our students and educators need now and in the future."

Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, also issued a statement March 20.

"This tentative ETFO agreement builds further momentum for deals and progress that students deserve, following last week's tentative agreement signed

with the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association," he said. "We remain focused on landing further deals, to provide stability and certainty to students, parents, and educators."

The province has not yet come to an agreement with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation or the union representing French-language elementary and high school teachers in Ontario.

ETFO represents 83,000 elementary public school teachers, occasional teachers and education professionals across the province. OSSTF has more than 60,000 members across Ontario, and OSSTF Dis-

trict 15 includes public high school teachers, occasional teachers, and about two dozen professional support personnel including social workers, speech language pathologists, and psychometrists.

Rotating one-day strikes involving the county's high school, alternate education centre, and elementary schools have taken place over the past several months prior to March Break. Issues identified by the OSSTF as important in their negotiations include class sizes, mandatory e-learning, and teacher compensation. For updates or more information, visit tldsbc.ca/labour-updates.

Variety show funds chlorinator for Water Ambassadors

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

Water Ambassadors Canada is congratulating Eleanor Cooper for helping them bring clean drinking water to Venezuelans by organizing the variety talent fundraiser held last November at the West Guilford Community Centre.

With the support of local musicians and entertainers such as Carl Dixon, Bill Gliddon, Wayne Cooper, Cheryl Cohoon, Heritage Ballet dancers, Luba Cargill, David and Shirley Barker, the first ever variety event helped to raise a little more than \$2,000.

Water Ambassadors is a non-profit organization that works to provide clean,

safe drinking water to impoverished people living in developing countries through building and repairing wells, installing water filtration and chlorination systems, constructing bio-sand filters and teaching health and hygiene.

Water Ambassadors founder Barry Hart said the money helped the Water Ambassadors purchase a chlorinator, which was given to Venezuelan Dr. Evelitce Gutierrez De Gines, who will use it on her travels to bring clean drinking water to hundreds, if not thousands of people in communities across Venezuela.

She was trained by the Water Ambassadors to use the chlorinator, which is a small 12-volt (car battery) unit that separates salt into sodium and chlorine gas, Water Ambassadors CEO Barry Hart wrote in an email. The portable unit needs

only a handful of salt to produce enough chlorine gas to purify up to 10,000 gallons of water per day.

"This portable system can be used very effectively in permanent situations and also in disaster relief like we did in Haiti after the earthquake," Hart writes.

Contaminated drinking water is the biggest cause of death and disease in the world, he said.

"The economy and infrastructure in Venezuela has collapsed in recent years. Hyperinflation has made their currency worthless, and there is little food, clean water, transportation or medical care. While thousands of Venezuelan refugees per day are leaving their country with the hope of finding a better life, some choose to stay and help their people," a Water Ambassadors report states.

Cooper said the inspiration for the event came from reading the *Echo* story "Haliburtonian helps Venezuelans access water."


The *Echo* columnist said learning about the Venezuelans' plight broke her heart and she was committed to helping.

Cooper was happy to learn about what the money will be able to do.

"It's nice to know that the money is being put to good use by the people who need it," she said.

She said the funds raised exceeded expectations and she appreciated the support of those who helped and those who attended.

"The response was beyond what I expected. I had no idea that people would be that generous," she said.



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HEARING SERVICE**

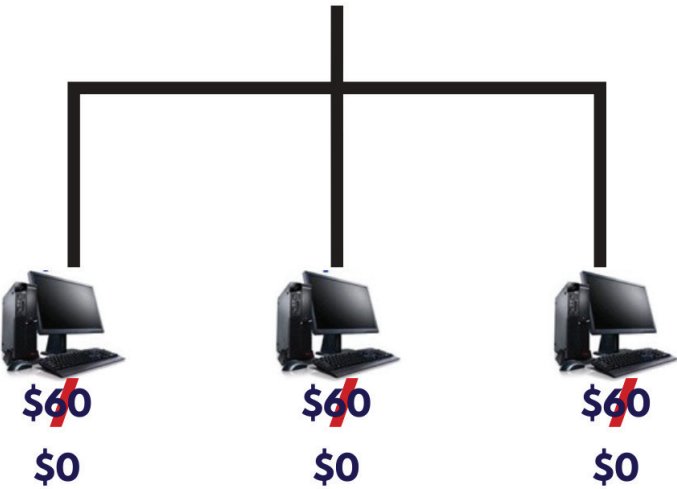
PUBLIC NOTICE

Hearing is considered essential. We are open in Minden and Haliburton. Covid – 19 has certainly changed our day to day hearing service. To protect our valued patients, and our wonderful staff we have implemented substantial disinfection procedures to help ensure the safety for all.

1. We will see patients ONLY by booked appointments. Absolutely no walk ins until further notice.
2. Our office is sanitized between each and every patient. If you are bringing in a hearing device for repair, for reprogramming or for any service please call us and book your time and we will accommodate you. Our outside door will be locked and we will meet you at the door to let you in. If you feel more comfortable waiting in your car we will simply take your device from you (wearing disposable gloves) and determine whether we can fix it on site or if we need to send it out for repair. Any reprogramming can be done without you being present. It will be done simulating your loss but will help avoid any one on one contact.
3. We are shortening our hours to allow staff to return to their homes as quickly as possible. Please leave a message on our answering machine and we will call you back once we return to our offices. We will check all messages daily. Please be brief. Leave your name and number.
4. Gord and I as well as Lindsay and Debbie are all committed to helping our community get through this difficult time. Be safe and remember we are all in this together...be kind...be patient with each other...be a Haliburtonian.

Sincerely,
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Gloria Carnochan*
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& Andy Mosher**
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Darlene Reil*
447-2055



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NEW LISTING

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- Open concept, one level living
- 2 bedrooms plus an office/den for overflow
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Greg Stamp*
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- On Beaver Creek, 2 acres.
- Det'd Dbl Garage & Det'd Insulated, Heated Shop



Melanie Vigrass*
286-2138 x 32



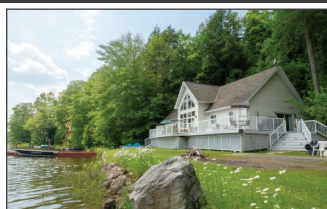
NEW LISTING

Moore Lake \$589,000

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- Includes garage and boathouse



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Redstone Lake \$675,000

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Social Distancing will be good for my garden: houseplant grooming

Part two in a series of garden tasks we can complete while practicing social distancing

WHEN I OPENED my eyes this morning, I was treated to an absolutely gorgeous, lipstick-pink bloom on my rat-tail cactus. It hasn't bloomed for a number of years, so the flower was a delightful

Crossword brought to you by

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1	2	3	4			5	6	7		8	9	10	11
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59						60				61			
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- CLUES ACROSS

 - 1. Bond villain Mikkelsen
 - 5. A team's best pitcher
 - 8. French river
 - 12. Mountain nymph (Greek)
 - 14. City of Angels airport
 - 15. Military force
 - 16. Scrawny
 - 18. Value
 - 19. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
 - 20. Highly seasoned sausage
 - 21. Trouble
 - 22. Prong
 - 23. Showing varying colors
 - 26. Cloaked
 - 30. Renters sign one
 - 31. Acquires
 - 32. Type of language (abbr.)
 - 33. Partner to pains
 - 34. Third portion of the small intestine
 - 39. Excessively theatrical actor
 - 42. Infraction
 - 44. Classical music for the stage
 - 46. Slogged
 - 47. One who terminates
- CLUES DOWN

 - 1. Female parents
 - 2. Region
 - 3. Transaction
 - 4. Heroic tale
 - 5. Of algae
 - 6. Luminous intensity unit
 - 7. Uncovers
 - 8. French commune name
 - 9. Poisonous gas
 - 10. Pearl Jam's bassist
 - 11. Horse groom in India
 - 13. Destroyed
- 17. A way to alter
 - 24. Promotional materials
 - 25. American state
 - 26. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand
 - 27. "Modern Family" network
 - 28. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
 - 29. Exercise system __-bo
 - 35. Type of bulb
 - 36. Opposite of beginning
 - 37. Utilize
 - 38. Type of student
 - 40. Deficiency of moisture
 - 41. Areas of the eye
 - 42. Select
 - 43. Sheets of floating ice
 - 44. Priests who act as mediums
 - 45. Roof of the mouth
 - 47. Unnatural
 - 48. Illuminated
 - 49. There are three famous ones
 - 52. Large, fast Australian birds
 - 53. "Dracula" heroine Harker
 - 54. Substitutes (abbr.)
 - 55. Tax

Answers on page 22

surprise. Of course, at the very same moment, I spied an artistically spun cobweb. Time for grooming the houseplants!

Almost all of our houseplants live outdoors from mid-May through mid-September. They are tucked in here and there among the containers of flowering annuals and add a tropical vibe to the patio and adjacent deck. Before they come in for the winter, I check the plants for insects, do some pruning, re-pot or add soil to the aggressive growers and finally, check the pots for critters. (I had a lovely milk snake hitch a ride inside one year and while it did match the décor, it was a bit unnerving!)

All the autumn care means that the spring grooming is lighter work but it does need doing.

Winter's low light conditions cause plants to grow unevenly, leaning toward the windows. Consequently, I begin by removing the "leggy," irregular growth of plants like begonias with pruning shears or sharp scissors. This trimming promotes stronger stems;

stems that are able to tolerate the wind that always whips up the exact day they go outside.

If you are looking for an easy care plant, the Boston fern is a great choice. It is quite tolerant of indoor conditions

and in fact, is one of the top plants for removing air pollutants. It only needs a quick haircut to remove any of the broken or dried out fronds and a spritz of water to rinse off the dust.

I wait until the plants go outside and show new growth before fertilizing with fish emulsion or a slow release, multi-purpose food. Last year I only had "slow release for hanging baskets" in the garden shed so that is what I used. It didn't seem to hurt the house-

plants but an even 20-20-20 is a better choice.

Dry heat of furnaces and wood stoves causes stress to plants and makes them susceptible to pests and diseases. Large leaved and thin leaved plants are prone to the most common indoor pest – the spider mite. Palms,

see page 17

Garden



Belinda Gallagher

Musings



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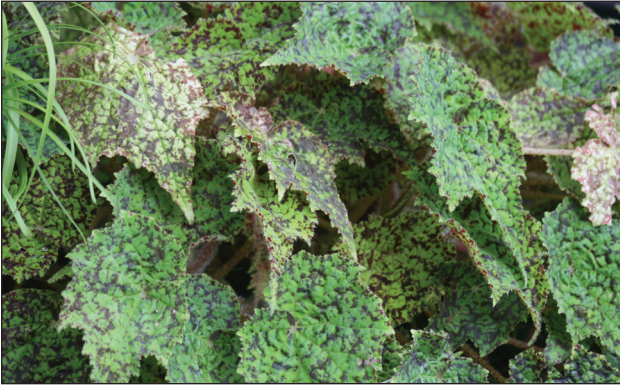
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Begonia Marmaduke has a lovely mottled colouring, but can have "leggy," irregular growth. Trimming with shears promotes stronger stems.

Insects less likely to bug fleshy plants

from page 16

elephant ears, bananas and ivies top the list. I haven't grown ivies or palms for years but I do have several tropical banana plants. They need a good washing this time of year to remove the pests and the webs they make on the reverse side of the leaves. I use warm, sudsy water and a sponge to bathe the bananas, however, if the pests are numerous, I take a sharp knife and cut the whole plant down to a couple of inches. It seems aggressive, but it works, and in a few weeks you will have nice new foliage.

According to the site, Plants Are the Strangest People, fleshy leaved plants like cactus and succulents are less tasty so that is where my plant collection is leaning now. I don't care how prickly a cactus is, if it doesn't get bugs, it is welcome. The only grooming the cactus get is a quick shower in the kitchen sink. I wait until they are outdoors to do any pruning to keep the spines at a far distance.

One advantage of any pruning you do is *more plants*. After all pruning = cuttings. Our mothers and grandmothers always shared cuttings as a gift of love and remembrance. Next time we'll discuss propagation tips. It will be a way to share some love in this time of worry and solitude.



Banana plants, ferns and cactus keep the living room looking green. Now is a good time to give the banana plants a wash, removing pests and cobwebs.



A cobweb on the rattail cactus bloom signals it's time for some spring cleaning.

SIRCH
community
services



Will You Help Us Help Others?

Like SIRCH, you are concerned about your neighbours in Haliburton County.

You want to help those most affected by lay-offs, social distancing, self-quarantine and loss of financial security, but it's risky to do practical things and you're not sure where to start.

SIRCH has a simple way you can have an immediate impact on those who need help in Haliburton County during the COVID-19 crisis.

Up until now, SIRCH has been making 400 meals per month and distributing them free through food banks, Ontario Works and other organizations in Haliburton County.

Now with the coronavirus, the demand for healthy, prepared meals has drastically increased.

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- Hundreds of people have suddenly been laid off
- One-third of our residents are seniors
- Haliburton already has a 23% child poverty rate
- We have the second highest cost of living in Ontario
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Prepared meals are essential for those with disabilities, anxiety, lack of cooking skills or resources, and for those who are ill, homeless and elderly.

The food banks will do their best, but for many families this may not meet the need in this increasingly urgent situation.

During the pandemic and until our community is back on its feet, our goal is to increase the number of prepared meals from 400 to 1,400 meals each month.

We can do it, but we need your help.

SIRCH has no base funding for this free food program – it relies on donations from individuals, organizations, churches and businesses.

It costs SIRCH about \$4 to make one healthy meal. Each comes with heating instructions and a nutritional label. Some meals are suitable for diabetics or others with special diets. Local produce is used whenever possible and groceries are purchased locally.

Please help keep Haliburton County fed.

With your help, SIRCH can meet the Covid-19 challenge: \$5,600/month for 6 months is needed.

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By cheque, which can be mailed to SIRCH Community Services, Box 687, Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0

We can get through this.

In the end, we will be a stronger community if we band together and look after each other.

*Sometimes our light goes out, but is blown again into instant flame
by an encounter with another human being."*

- Albert Schweitzer



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HOUSING MANAGER

Haliburton Community Housing Corporation

Haliburton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) operates two non-profit housing projects in the Village of Haliburton, Ontario

JOB SUMMARY

The Housing Manager reports directly to the HCHC Board of Directors and oversees all day-to-day operations at Parklane Apartments and Echo Hills Apartments in compliance with federal, provincial and municipal legislation, ensuring that all operations are conducted in timely and cost-effective ways. The Manager maintains positive relationships with tenants, staff, vendors and the Board of Directors.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Knowledge of the Housing Services Act and regulations, Residential Tenancies Act and regulations, social housing programs, other legislation pertinent to operating residential properties
- At least 5 years of supervisory experience
- Strong communication, interpersonal, multitasking and conflict resolution skills
- Compassion and empathy skills suitable for a social housing environment
- Effective budgeting, analytical, administrative and organizational skills
- Proficient computer skills, including MS Word, Excel, Outlook, HM Worx
- Ability to work with minimal supervision
- Possesses a valid driver's licence and vehicle with insurance
- The successful candidate will be required to obtain a clean Vulnerable Sector Check prior to being confirmed for the position

This is a full-time salaried position with an expectation that while the work can be generally completed Monday to Friday at 40 hours a week, there will be times after hours and weekend work are expected without payment of additional compensation. The start day is negotiable the salary is competitive and commensurate with experience, benefits are included. References will be requested at the interview. Any questions email Glenn Scott at contact information is below.

Resume plus cover letter must be submitted electronically no later than 3 p.m. on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 to:

Mr. Glenn Scott, President
Haliburton Community Housing Corporation
Email address: president@haliburtonhousing.com

HCHC thanks all applicants. Only those chosen to be interviewed will be contacted. If contacted for an interview, please inform if you require accommodation in the interview process.



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Employment Opportunity Municipality of Dysart et al

Roads Department Seasonal Employees

Reporting to the Operations Manager, the successful applicants will have sound knowledge of the methods, tools and equipment required for the general maintenance of roads during summer months. Primary duties include, but are not limited to, traffic control, pothole patching and spray patching. Previous road maintenance and/or construction experience is considered an asset.

Self-motivated applicants must be able to work outdoors with minimal supervision. A valid Ontario Class 'G' licence is required along with an acceptable abstract. Pursuant to CUPE Local #2142 the rate of pay is \$22.25 per hour based on a 40-hour work week.

Interested individuals are invited to email a detailed resume and cover letter in confidence to:

Cheryl Coulson, Clerk
ccoulson@dysartetat.ca

No Later Than 12:00 pm Friday, April 17th, 2020.

**** Interviews will commence once the municipal office is reopened to the public and the Municipality has lifted its State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 Pandemic****

Director of Community Relations

Responsible for implementing the sales and marketing program for the Gardens of Haliburton Retirement Residence.

Do you care about people and get along with them well? Are you comfortable with goals and timelines? Do you ask good questions? Do you listen for the answer? Are you determined to accomplish something every day?

- The position has a very competitive compensation plan.
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And the banks are
ever green.



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FUNERAL HOME

**Kenneth "Ken" Wilson**
(Resident of Haliburton)

Peacefully surrounded by his family at Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in Orillia on Friday afternoon, March 20, 2020 in his 93rd year. Beloved husband of 70 years and best friend of Dorothy Wilson (nee Playford). Loving father of Paul (Kim), Debbie (Ed McCallum), John (Marilou Mizzan) and Tracey. Fondly remembered by his grandchildren Lauren (Chris W.), Adam (Ashley), Jeff (Jessica), Hilary (Ryan), Andrea, Courtney (Monte), Brett (Lauren), Holly (Pablo), Michael (Laura), Ryan (Joanne), Shawn (Alex), Lyndsey, Andy, Carter and by his twenty seven great grandchildren. Predeceased by his brother Donald.

Ken moved to Haliburton in 1962 and worked as Manager of the Bank of Montreal. In 1969, he left the bank after 23 years and became part owner of Haliburton Lumber until he retired in 1989. He had a great love of sports and was an accomplished hockey player and coached for many years. He also enjoyed baseball, fishing and hunting.

Ken was a very generous volunteer and served many years on the Haliburton Hospital Board and the Haliburton County Development Corporation. He was Past President of the Haliburton Rotary Club and served as Treasurer of Haliburton United Church, and local chapters of Victorian Order Of Nurses (VON) and the Salvation Army.

Visitation, Celebration Of Life & Reception

A Celebration of Ken's life will take place at a later date. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation or the Haliburton Hospital Auxiliary would be appreciated by the family. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209.

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INSIDE
THIS WEEK:

ATV FIGHT CONTINUES

Dysart council balks at opening up
municipal roads for ATV travel

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Red Hawks fly to London, Ont. to compete
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Tuesday, March 16, 2004

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\$1 including GST

Doctors' clinic, housing complex planned

Developer proposes
100-unit retirement
community between
Industrial Park Rd.
and Halbiem Cres.

SHERYL LOUCKS

Staff Reporter

Plans to build a commercial plaza in the area where the late Dr. Harry Good's house sits overlooking the river leading to Grass Lake have been abandoned but a new proposal would see the construction of a new doctors' clinic that would be connected to a 100-unit retirement community.

In February last year a proposal for a 64,000 square foot commercial building on 9.5 acres was put forward by the Otis Group of Companies out of Toronto. A public meeting in the Dysart et al council chambers was packed with people voicing their opposition to having the area rezoned from residential to commercial. The most frequent objection was that Haliburton did not need more retail space outside of the downtown core when there were empty storefronts on the main street. The property was, however, rezoned and then the proposal was abandoned. Philip Otis did not return a phone call from the Echo asking for an explanation.

Last week, a new developer, Dr. Daniel Perlitz of Dravidian

See **Doctors** page 4



MARTHA PERKINSEPHOTO

When Irish eyes are singing

Margaret Jeske and her Gentlemen of Song delighted the crowd at the St. Patrick's Day luncheon on Friday. As dozens of people filled the Haliburton Legion to enjoy Irish stew and biscuits to raise money for the Haliburton Hospital Auxiliary, the men's choir brought a touch of the Emerald Isle to the festivities with their rendition of traditional Irish music.

Maple syrup producers get tax reprieve

Industrial assessment would have put an end to 'mom and pop' operations

JERRY GROZELLE

Staff Reporter

Local maple syrup producers are breathing a collective sigh of relief. The provincial government has announced that it will not implement the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation's recommendation to tax maple syrup producers at industrial tax levels.

The MPAC recommendation would have meant a huge increase in taxes to maple syrup producers and put most "mom and pop" operations out of business.

"We have taken immediate steps to address the concerns of maple syrup producers," said Finance Minister Greg Sorbara in a news release issued Wednesday. "We are listening to people's concerns about the importance of consistent and timely application of assessment and classification policies by the MPAC."

Maple syrup producers faced a change in classification from farm to industrial for the 2004 taxation year.

"We will continue to work with these groups and Ontarians to come up with

property tax assessment solutions that work," Sorbara said.

The news release said that the government is calling on MPAC, maple syrup producers and representatives of the broader farming community to develop mutually-acceptable criteria for deciding what constitutes industrial production of maple syrup.

"The government will also work with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and other agricultural groups to establish clarity in agricultural definitions for the purpose of property classification, said

Steve Peters, Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Tom Dawson has a small family maple syrup production called Wintergreen on Haliburton County Road 1 near Gelert.

"That needed to happen," was his initial comment when he learned that the government had decided not to change the taxation structure as planned. "It was causing all kinds of problems."

Dawson said he has spoken at length to policy directors at MPAC. "They have tried this

See **Assessment** page 2

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Rosemarie Jung
Sales Representative

Rosemarie developed her passion for real estate at a very early age. Rosemarie's focus as a Realtor is on helping people find their next home or cottage property. It's her personal approach to working with her clients that sets her apart.



Nicole Baumgartner
Broker

We are pleased to announce Nicole's return to the Team April 1st. She is moving back to the area with her husband and two daughters. She grew up immersed in the Real Estate Business, and brings a young, fresh and vibrant approach to the Team. She is also a lifelong Haliburtonian and Linda's daughter. Her dedication and excitement is evident to her clients.

** Currently registered with RE/MAX Of Wasaga Beach Inc



Connie Dykstra
Client Care Assistant

As our Client Care Assistant, Connie's collaboration with the team adds continuity to the services we provide our clients. Connie relocated to the Highlands in 2016. She brings ten years administration experience from both healthcare and a real estate background.